

ANNUAL REPORT FY 2020



"Today is your day to paint life in bold colors, set today's rhythm with your heart-drum, walk today's march with courage. Create today as your celebration of life." ~Jonathan Lockwood Huie

GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CITIZENS (GACEC)

*Submitted By: Wendy Strauss, Executive Director & Ann Fisher, Chairperson
Prepared By: Lacie Spence, Administrative Coordinator*

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Mission Statement

The Council's mission is to provide leadership through advice and advocacy for the unmet needs of citizens of all ages who are exceptional, in order to improve their lives.*

- * The term "exceptional citizens" refers to persons of all ages who have special needs. It should be noted that the GACEC state mandate for exceptional citizens includes children with special gifts and talents.

What is the Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens?

Statutory Responsibilities

In accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 300.650, the Council serves as the State Advisory Panel for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and its amendments.

1. Delaware Code: Title 14, Chapter 31, Sub. Sec. 3111
2. Federal Statute: Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and its amendments
The State Advisory Panel will:
 - (1) "...advise(s) the state educational agency of unmet needs within the state in the education of children with disabilities;
 - (2) comment(s) publicly on any rules or regulations proposed for issuance by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities and the procedures for distribution of funds under this part; and
 - (3) assist(s) the state in developing and reporting such data and evaluations as may assist the Secretary under Section 618..."
3. Delaware Code: Title 14, Chapter 24, subsection 2408



GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CITIZENS (GACEC)

The legal authority of this Council shall be Title 14, Chapter 31, Exceptional Persons, Sub. Sec. 3111: "The Governor shall appoint an advisory council to act in an advisory capacity to the State Board of Education and other State agencies on the needs of exceptional citizens." The General Assembly shall provide for the maintenance of the Council. The Council shall also serve in the capacity of the Advisory Panel as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA).

(a) *General.* The membership of the State advisory panel must consist of members appointed by the Governor, or any other official authorized under State law to make these appointments, that is representative of the State population and that is composed of individuals involved in, or concerned with the education of children with disabilities including:

1. Parents of children with disabilities (ages birth through 26);
2. Individuals with disabilities;
3. Teachers;
4. Representatives of institutions of higher education that prepare special education and related services personnel;
5. State and local education officials, including officials who carry out activities under subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.);
6. Administrators of programs for children with disabilities;
7. Representatives of other State agencies involved in the financing or delivery of related services to children with disabilities;
8. Representatives of private schools and public charter schools;
9. Not less than one representative of a vocational, community, or business organization concerned with the provision of transition services to children with disabilities;
10. A Representative from the State child welfare agency responsible for foster care; and
11. Representatives from the State juvenile and adult corrections agencies.

(b) *Special Rule.* A majority of the members of the panel must be individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities (age's birth through 26).

A Word from the Executive Director

All one can say is that 2019 and 2020 have been years of changes. Over the past year the GACEC has worked on many pieces of legislation, regulations and policy changes, as well as upgrades to the building. The entire George V. Massey Station received a fresh coat of paint, as well as new flooring on the first floor and new carpeting in the conference room upstairs. We also recently had an alarm system installed.

Some other changes that happened for the office were that after nine years with the Council, Sybil Baker resigned as our administrative coordinator at the GACEC. She moved to Texas with her husband, who accepted a position as a surgical technician. We will miss Sybil dearly and appreciate her hard work and dedication to the Council as well as to individuals with disabilities throughout the state. We wish her and her husband well in their new adventure.

We want to congratulate and welcome Lacie Spence, who is stepping into the administrative coordinator position. Lacie has an Associate's degree in Dental Hygiene from Delaware Technical and Community College. She conducted her research project on treating patients with autism. Lacie brings with her a wealth of information regarding serving people from diverse backgrounds, including individuals with disabilities. She has volunteered at the GACEC since 1998.



Sybil Baker at her last GACEC meeting. Farewell and best wishes to Sybil and her family!



Welcome Lacie Spence!



In addition, the GACEC is working on and will continue to work on upgrades to the Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens website. We are very proud of the launch of the updated Delaware Disability Hub transition website. The site was recently re-designed and contains resources for young adults with disabilities transitioning out of school. There are many new aspects to the DelDHub including a transition timeline, which provides information on age specific targets and suggested goals. We have a parent section on the revised site. The planning categories covered on the DelDHub are Education, Employment, Housing, Transportation, Health, Legal Issues, It's My Life and Understanding My Disability. We also have an updated reader, translation, and search button for easier navigation. Please visit the site at <http://www.deldhub.com>.

GACEC worked with other disability advocates and organizations to discuss creative ways that we could honor the 30-year anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Due to COVID-19, we knew we could not celebrate like we did for the 25-year anniversary five years ago. Everyone got creative and thought of ideas that could be done virtually in order to honor and celebrate this meaningful event. The Council sent out daily reminders on our Facebook page starting around 10 days prior and hosted a Zoom viewing of the GACEC directed musical; Boundless a Musical Journey. We were able to get coverage on WBOC regarding the ADA and the launch of the new website. The musical and the WBOC interview can be viewed by going to the GACEC website at gacec.delaware.gov.

During COVID-19, there have been many additional meetings happening at the state and federal level. Our population of constituents are more vulnerable now than ever before. We need to ensure that we are looking out for them and assisting in any way that we can, whether it be through regulation, policy or legislative changes. At the very minimum, we can all reach out to check on our neighbors and loved ones to make certain that they are okay during these difficult times. The State Health Operations Center Functional Information and Support Center Partner (SHOC FISC) met weekly immediately after the state went into lockdown due to COVID-19. We were kept abreast on the number of cases, the number of deaths, as well as the different resources available in the community. We also relayed issues that were happening to individuals with disabilities in the community and where services were lacking.

I worked with the Rodel Foundation and made suggestions for questions for the two different surveys they conducted regarding COVID-19. One survey was geared toward teachers and administrators and the other survey was for families. Please visit their website to read the results of those surveys at <http://rodelde.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-Community-Survey-Results-April-2020.pdf>

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The GACEC worked with the State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) on a bill to allow individuals under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to attend meetings virtually and be considered present. Well, one positive thing that came out of COVID-19 was the passage of Senate Substitute 1 for Senate Bill 243 (SS1 for SB243), which was signed by the Governor on July 23. This is a huge success for the disability community.

The GACEC also developed an ad-hoc committee to review the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) Regulations 922 and 925 in relation to children with disabilities. After the ad-hoc committee met with the DDOE we were informed that they were going to republish the regulations because they were making substantial changes to them. As of this writing, the regulations have been republished and are out for review and public comment.

Many Council members listened in on the Reopening of Schools Workgroup public meetings via zoom Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evening for five weeks. Council wrote letters to the workgroups addressing the weekly discussions to express our concerns. The GACEC also wrote to the Governor and Secretary of Education about the reopening and concerns for students, especially students with special needs.

Staff and some Council members met with Secretary Bunting and MaryAnn (Mitch) Mieczkowski of DDOE to discuss the CARES ACT funding and suggestions on where funds should be spent.

I attended many meetings this year regarding early childhood. Those meetings included the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) monitoring of Part C and Child Development Watch, State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) weekly planning calls and drafting of potential legislation to move Part C under the Department of Education.

We have had a few individuals resign from Council this year who will be greatly missed. Their names will be highlighted in the Chairperson's report. Please remember Council is always looking for individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities under the age of 26. I want to thank the Council members for their countless hours of advocacy on behalf of Delaware's children. You all have truly made a difference. I would also like to thank the GACEC staff. We could not do what we do without them. I would be remiss if I did not also thank the Governor, the Joint Finance Committee (JFC), the Legislators and all our other sister agencies that assist us in our everyday operations and advocacy. A special thanks goes out to the Department of Technology and Information (DTI) this year for all their patience and energy working with us on the Delaware Disability Hub. Stay safe and healthy in our ever-changing world. Be kind to one another and check in on your loved ones and your neighbors.

Best Regards, Wendy Strauss

Message from the Chair

As I reflect on the past year, it's hard to remember what life was like prior to COVID-19. Without a clear end in sight, planning for anything must take into account the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved. Therefore, the work of our dedicated members takes on even more importance. Thank you to each and every one of you for your continued passionate advocacy especially during this difficult and stressful time. I truly appreciate all your hard work and dedication! Your commitment to not only Council, but to individuals with disabilities in our state is commendable.

Council would like to welcome new members and thank members who are no longer serving with us. We were sorry to say goodbye to Dafne Carnright, Cathy Cowin, Emmanuel Jenkins, Danna Levy, Carrie Melchisky and Howard Shiber this past year. We thank them all for their service to individuals with disabilities in Delaware and to the GACEC. We also wish them the best as they continue their advocacy via other avenues. Council was happy to welcome Jill Scannell and Treenae Parker to our ranks in FY2020. This past year saw us at our lowest number of members in decades but due to recruiting efforts by Wendy Strauss and GACEC members, we look forward to adding new members, particularly parents of children with disabilities to our group in FY2021.

As a Council, we have reviewed, commented on, and advocated for legislative and regulatory changes that will positively impact the lives of Delaware citizens with exceptionalities across their life span. The emergence of a national pandemic only made us more vigilant in our efforts to ensure our citizens are not forgotten or marginalized. I look forward to continuing this important work with all of you as well as the dedicated staff of GACEC as we begin the next chapter of our advocacy journey in what has become a new "normal."

Yours in service,

Ann C. Fisher



Council Goals 2019-2020



GOAL 1: Outcomes for students with exceptionalities will be improved by monitoring and supporting the implementation of the Annual Performance Report (APR), State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), State Professional Development Grant (SPDG), Every Student Succeeds Act, and review of the Department of Education (DOE) Special Education Regulations.

GOAL 2: Programs and services for students with exceptionalities will be improved by monitoring and advocating for the delivery of evidence-based special education and related services in the least restrictive and natural environments.

GOAL 3: Programs and services for citizens with exceptionalities will be improved by reviewing and advocating for funding, policies and procedures that positively impact and empower citizens with exceptionalities.

GOAL 4: The GACEC will impact legislators, agencies, councils and other entities through more effective communication and collaboration.

GOAL 5: Delaware Department of Education standards-based reform and accountability efforts will be reviewed to provide advice and advocacy for the inclusion of students with exceptionalities in all programs and initiatives.

Infant and Early Childhood Committee Report 2019-2020

The members of the Infant/Early Childhood committee began our fiscal year looking at the ongoing decision to transition the Birth to Three Early Intervention Program from the Division of Management Services to the Division of Public Health. In November 2019 this was still under review and was available for public comment in February 2020, along with their federal grant application.

In January the committee spoke with Cindy Brown regarding the 619 perspective on the policy update process. The Early Childhood Inclusion Committee (ECIC) was busy working on Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and working points for the upcoming year. Indicators and unit counts were also discussed, as well as a couple of positions available on the DDOE website including, Inclusion Specialist and Coordinator to work with childcare centers to better prepare three-year olds for transition.

Council did not meet in March due to COVID-19 and we did not have an Infant and Early Childhood meeting in April.

By May, there were four documents available on the Birth to Three website for public comment. These documents included the Early Intervention Policy and Procedure Manual, Guide to Parent's Rights, Birth to Three Prior Written Notice, and the Birth to Three Dispute Resolution Request Form. The public comment period ended in early June. Jennifer Pulcinella thanked Zack Davis of the Center for Disabilities Studies for his article on Adjustment for Remote Learning that he wrote for the University of Delaware. The article was very relatable for many students.

In June, the transition from the Division of Management Services to Division of Public Health was coming to fruition. The GACEC Policy and Law Committee looked into the formal documents and provided extensive comments. "One significant change presented is the decision to transition the Birth to Three Early Intervention Program from the Division of Management Services to the Division of Public Health. On information and belief, stakeholders have criticized the previous organizational structure due to the lack of a single line of authority between Birth to Three and Child Development Watch (CDW). There are concerns that Birth to Three's focus was on policy, administrative issues and monitoring, but not on impacting service operations within CDW. This new structure will likely address these "disconnect" concerns by housing both arms of early intervention services within the same Division."

We are looking forward to seeing how this all works out in this tumultuous time.

Children and Youth Committee Report 2019-2020

The Children and Youth Committee spent hours reviewing goals and discussing the progress they have been making, in addition to fine-tuning their goals and objectives. When they were made aware of the issues happening with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) at the Christina School District, they formed an ad hoc committee to obtain more information. The ad hoc committee will continue to meet to discuss recommendations for improving current processes and those that need improvement to ensure special education students have appropriate IEPs that are being implemented appropriately.

Maria Locuniak from the Delaware Department of Education presented data on APR indicators 15 and 16 to the Children and Youth Committee. The committee and staff worked on a letter addressing the alternative assessments in hopes that DOE would consider it. The committee will continue to review this issue and bring it up at a future meeting for a vote. The committee discussed the current school construction formula and how to make progress with implementing changes.



It is obvious that COVID-19 has slowed down the progress of the Children and Youth Committee, but they will continue trying to discuss some issues over the summer months. Annalisa Ekbladh from Autism Delaware presented to the committee regarding 12-month programming, which seems to be diminishing in length and quality. The committee plans on doing a review of this topic as one of their goals to ensure that the children's needs are being met. Annalisa also spoke about restraints and seclusion. It was stated that there were many issues surrounding this topic and it may be wise to start an ad hoc committee on restraints and seclusion issues.

The chair of the Children and Youth Committee, Bill Doolittle, reported that there is still weakness in the state regarding training and supporting parents to help children with remote learning. There is a universal need for

Wi-Fi access throughout the state. The committee initiated weekly discussions on meetings of the reopening of the schools work groups. Many Council members and staff attended these meetings which were held three evenings a week for five weeks. Comments were submitted weekly based on the information discussed that week and to ensure that the needs of students with exceptionalities were not ignored. A copy of the letter submitted on the final recommendations of the Workgroups may be seen at the end of the annual report. See appendix A.

Adult Transition Services Committee Report 2019-2020

In November, Michael Wagner from DOE reported information about the driver's education program to the Adult Transition Committee. We were advised by Mr. Wagner that all driver's education teachers receive a class in special education methods and materials. For all students, there is a driving rubric, which must be met for students to receive a blue card. Then, all students can receive a white certificate (temporary license) to practice with parents. Class time includes seven drives with the teacher. Students with a physical disability must pass the written test with the teacher and then will be evaluated by Moss, an outside driving agency.

In January, Dale Matusevich reported 2017-2018 information about Transition Indicators 1 (graduation), 2 (dropout rate), 13 (transition) and 14 (outcomes).

- Indicator 1 - rate is federally approved out to 2030.
- Indicator 2 - proposed rate is 3.7. It will never go down to 0 due to financial reasons as well as school related. September 30th count for grades 9-12 indicated 6000 students that showed active, but not necessarily in a seat. There were 150-160 dropouts.
- Indicator 13 - needs to be 100%. Did not provide rating at the time of the meeting.
- Indicator 14 - Out of 1300 exiters, received feedback from 616. 281 had completed at least one semester of college. 453 had a combination of higher education and employment in competitive, integrated work for at least 20 hours a week. 46 had other education/training and worked less than 20 hours a week.

Data was shared across agencies with a response rate of 53%. Six districts are participating in the pipeline, in which Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs are being examined for accessibility for students with disabilities. Districts included are Capitol, Laurel, Appoquinimink, Sussex Tech, Smyrna and Colonial. Currently there are few supports in the CTE classes. There are focus groups with CTE teachers who see that poor communication and lack of opportunities for training about accommodations and modifications are the largest issues.

In February, Matthew Ritter from the Division of Parks and Recreation and Anthony Gonzon from the Division of Fish and Wildlife reported about accessibility updates to the parks. There are 17 parks within Delaware. Currently, Cape Henlopen has Mobi mats for the beach, bathrooms are being updated, and pavilions are being made accessible. At Lum's Pond, the campground is being updated. Trap Pond is working on a step down for kayaks for accessibility. Bellevue Hall is updating to be more accessible, including an upgrade of bathrooms. Brandywine Zoo is also making areas more accessible. At White Clay, the trail, hay wagons, fishing dock, hunting stands, and tent camping have been made more accessible. In the future there will be additional updates such as accessible cabins at Killen's Pond; splash pad at Trapp Pond and a nature center at White Clay. Currently, parks

are 65% self-sufficient and statewide trails are federally funded 80% and must have the state provide a 20% match. GACEC wrote a letter to the legislature thanking them for their continued support in providing accessibility. There is a \$500,000 bond bill for fish and wildlife habitat conservation and outdoor recreation. We learned from Mr. Gonzon that fishing and hunting license money and tax on fishing gear must go to wildlife conservation. The wildlife viewing areas, fishing piers and visitor centers are being made accessible. Mr. Gonzon pointed out that hunting blinds are not easy to make accessible.

In April presenters included Dan Guidice, Training Specialist of the Columbus Organization, Shenika Kirby, Executive State Director of the Columbus Organization. Also presenting were Stacy Watkins of the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) Community Services, Colleen Jones, DDDS Lifespan Supports for Families in New Castle County (NCC) and Erik Hachrein, DDDS Lifespan Waiver Support.

The presentation provided DDDS/Columbus Organization updates including Targeted Case Management, which began in July 2017. The purpose of Targeted Case Management is to assess the needs of the individual, develop a person-centered plan, facilitate a referral and access to needed services, and provide monetary support according to a person-centered plan. Person-centered Planning began in December 2017 and the Lifespan Waiver began in March 2018. Staff turnover was studied beginning in July of 2018. Supervisors are now taking over caseloads when a Community Navigator leaves. There is a new state director, quality enhancement coordinator, training specialist and intake specialists to address the lifespan waiver. More meetings with DDDS have occurred and communication is improving. Caseload reduction is being explored. Lifespan waiver enrollment since March 2018 was 770. There are currently 3211 individuals eligible for DDDS. More training is now required for employees. Training is developed for any issues that arise. Person-centered planning is a focus. Weekly/bi-weekly calls occur for hot topics, ensuring that everyone is speaking the same language. New hires now receive two weeks of orientation in an intense group training and job shadowing. Documentation is placed on SharePoint and the storage system is being updated. The Columbus Organization has a designated trainer that Community Navigators can go to for questions.

In May, Maureen Whalen from DOE, Adult Education and Darrell Miller from DOE reported about special education in the prisons. The data provided was from July 2019 through May 15, 2020. The last day of classes was in March 2020 due to COVID-19 so some of the data was estimated. There were 127 eligible students of which 16 left before receiving services and three were in two prisons. There remained 108 of which 44 had IEPs and 64 stated they did not want to receive education. Fifty-five were detainees who had various lengths of time. IEP meetings are held through ZOOM. Adult education provided individualized instruction with Section 504 accommodations. Out of these students, 55% had a learning disability, 22% had an emotional disability, and 20% had other health impairments. There was one person with a traumatic brain injury and one person with mild intellectual disability. Students can receive a certificate of attainment

for increase of skills. During COVID-19, packets are given and then mailed in for scoring. Students get credit for good time if work is completed and sent in. It is possible to do video conferencing in some prisons. The possibility of getting funding through the CARES act is currently being explored. Each prison is set up differently with Young being the most completely set up. This past school year one person received a diploma of alternative achievement and one person received a Life Skills Certificate, which has a virtual process. No information was available about the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Movement has been restructured and prisons are still working on how to keep education going.



In June, a presentation was given by Todd Webb, who is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator from the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), the chairperson of the State Council for Persons with Disabilities and liaison for Project SEARCH housed at DelDOT. Mr. Webb expressed a need for input from consumers regarding initiatives from

DelDOT to ensure feedback about accessibility. He suggested a transportation ad hoc committee to discuss a Dart paratransit app and a sidewalk warning system. Mr. Webb would like to see local help modifying cars, so people do not need to go out of state. There is a group initiated by the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to see how to modify cars. The group includes a physician and several people to help with policy. There are no community members yet. In addition, there is a group of students at the University of Delaware looking into improving accessible parking, as there is not enough, and it is abused. DMV has a pilot program using a driving stimulator to see if someone will be able to pass the driving test. Delaware has a high level of death for pedestrians and there is no education on pedestrian safety. It has been suggested that this should be incorporated into the health curriculum. Mr. Webb also pointed out that Delaware needs an ADA coordinator for all state agencies. DelDOT is the only one that currently has a coordinator. Mr. Webb noted that the ADA is an unfunded mandate and must shift resources. The Federal government now has a new reporting system to make it easier to report violations. Project SEARCH is not teaching anything about ADA and the rights of people with disabilities in the workplace.

Policy and Law Committee Report 2019-2020

This year the Policy and Law committee was only able to review a limited number of bills before Covid-19 slowed the legislative process for the General Assembly. The Legislature was able to resume meeting near the end of the legislative session, but the emphasis was on passing a budget by the June 30 deadline. Many of the bills proposed were never heard and voted out of their respective committees. The Policy and Law committee also reviewed and provided commentary on thirty-seven proposed regulations. Please see the attached appendices for a full listing of the responses and outcomes of the proposed legislation and regulations commented on by the GACEC. GACEC members and staff are part of outside committees that review legislation and regulations that are commented on and affect the lives of individuals with disabilities. Below we will highlight a few of the bills that the GACEC shared observations and commentary.

House Bill No. 175 will allow any qualified voter to vote by mail in primary, general and special federal elections. Council endorsed the proposed legislation.

House Bill No. 263 limits the amount an individual must pay for prescription insulin drugs to no more than \$100.00 per month regardless of the amount or kind of insulin that is required by the insured individual. It also requires that insurance plans include at least one formulation of insulin on the lowest tier of the drug formulary maintained by the carrier. Council endorsed the proposed legislation that was later signed by the Governor.

House Bill No. 307 proposes to add language to various chapters of the Delaware Code to mandate health insurance coverage for an "annual behavioral health well check". An annual behavioral health well check is defined as "an annual visit with a licensed mental health clinician with at minimum a master's level degree." Expanded coverage for preventative care and early intervention will benefit individuals with mental health conditions and individuals who may be at risk of developing mental health conditions later in life. Council supported the proposed legislation, which was sadly left in committee due to Covid-19.

Senate Bill No. 177 amends Title 21 of Delaware Code striking language requiring the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to suspend the license of any student who has been expelled from school. Council endorsed the proposed legislation that was later signed by the Governor.

Senate Bill No. 204 requires all Delaware public schools to begin their school year after Labor Day. Council shared observations and concerns. Council also requested information on what research, if any, was considered by the Task Force to determine that this change will positively impact student learning. This legislation was also left in committee due to Covid-19.

Highlights and Collaborations

The GACEC held its Annual Fall Retreat on October 19, 2019, at the Dover Downs Hotel and Conference Center Dover, DE as part of the Council's planning activities for FY 2020. Retreat participants included Council members, as well as Mary Ann Mieczkowski from the Delaware Department of Education (DOE), who presented on Transition from Part C to Part B, MTSS, PIPEline and/or SDLMI. The Council also heard from Charisse Craig, Jacquie Truluck, Samantha Weatherford, Susan Campbell, and Tracy A. Bombara, who are experts in the field of Speech Language Pathology (SLP). They spoke about the current recruitment efforts at the University of Delaware for an SLP graduate program. The Council learned about issues that are still taking place in the field and the importance of those concerns.

The following is a list of some of GACEC's collaborative efforts with other organizations and agencies to promote education and awareness:

- The GACEC wrote more than 1800 letters to the Governor, Legislators, the Department of Education, and other agencies advocating on behalf of individuals with disabilities and their families.
- **LIFE Conference Design Team** - The annual LIFE Conference seeks to assure that persons with disabilities in Delaware have full access to supportive Legislation, Independence, Family support services and Education. GACEC Executive Director Wendy Strauss and GACEC Office Manager Kathie Cherry are members of the LIFE Conference Design Team. The team is also comprised of representatives from the Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC), State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD), Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS), Delaware Public Health (DPH), Easter Seals, the Division of Medicaid, and Medicare Assistance (DMMA), DOE and the Delaware Coalition for the Americans with Disabilities Act (DCADA). The 2019 LIFE conference was attended by over 700 people. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 LIFE conference is currently being planned and has been postponed until September of 2021.



SYBIL BAKER & WENDY STRAUSS AT THE LIFE CONFERENCE

- **GACEC Office Manager Kathie Cherry** is a member of the **SCPD Policy and Law Committee**. This committee reviewed and/or provided commentary on **more than 130** proposed or final regulations, State bills, Federal bills and many other policies which impact persons with disabilities.
- **SCPD Brain Injury Committee (BIC)** - GACEC Executive Director Wendy Strauss is a member and former Administrative Coordinator Sybil Baker was a member of the SCPD Brain Injury Committee (BIC). The mission of BIC is to improve the lives of Delawareans with brain injury by providing the following: 1) a forum for the sharing and analysis of information; 2) a network to identify and facilitate acquisition of enhanced resources; 3) a technical assistance provider to educate public and private policymakers; and 4) an advocacy agency to promote a consumer oriented, effective injury and prevention service delivery system.
- **DOE Special Education Leadership Work Group** - GACEC staff attend these statewide meetings to monitor what is happening with special education in Delaware, as well as to provide input.
- **Dover Air Force Base Exceptional Family Member Program** - GACEC staff has attended information fairs held on Dover Air Force Base by their Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP). Information about the GACEC and our mission was shared base-wide at the event. This event is attended by hundreds of Air Force member and their families at Dover Air Force Base.
- **Transition Conference** - GACEC staff attended the Transition Conference held by DOE and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) in December 2019. Over 700 individuals were in attendance for the 18th annual event. Staff provided information on the GACEC and how Council seeks to provide advice and advocacy for persons with disabilities for their full lifespan in Delaware.
- **Heart 2 Heart Hugs Campaign**- Generous community members donated handmade scarves, hats, mittens and other warm items for children with disabilities who are inadequately housed or in the foster care system. Individuals also provided monetary donations to purchase items that provide warmth for these children. The GACEC will no longer be hosting this event.



DONATED ITEMS BEING DELIVERED

- **Inter-Agency Coordinating Council (ICC)** - The ICC focuses on early childhood issues. Wendy Strauss and other members of Council are members and attend meetings to provide information and keep up to date on new information regarding early childhood issues.
- **Access to General Education Curriculum (AGEC) Work Group** - This group focuses on assessment issues for students in special education. GACEC Office Manager Kathie Cherry attends these meetings to provide input from her perspective as a parent, as well as a representative of the Council.
- **Disability History and Awareness Month Activities** - 2019 marked the ninth year for the GACEC's Disability History and Awareness Month efforts and activities. Council celebrated by hosting an online viewing of the musical Boundless! The GACEC also held its' annual poster contest with the theme being "Inclusion is within everyone's ability; we are all ABLE." The winners and their guests were invited to attend an awards ceremony on December 11, 2019 at the Duncan Center in Dover.
- **Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS) Community Advisory Council (CAC)** - The Center for Disabilities Studies is supported with its work through the contribution of their Community Advisory Council (CAC). The CAC is composed of individuals with developmental and related disabilities; family members of individuals with developmental disabilities; representatives from disability-related training, service, and advocacy organizations; representatives from state agencies; and other disability advocates. Meetings of the CAC are held four times a year. GACEC Executive Director Wendy Strauss is a CAC member.
- **Special Education Strategic Planning Council (SESPAC)** - GACEC Executive Director Wendy Strauss is a member and former Administrative Coordinator Sybil Baker was a member of the SESPAC. They regularly attended meetings to facilitate collaboration with this work group on issues relevant to students with disabilities. In addition, Council member Bill Doolittle is the current Co- chair of the SESPAC. Council member Tika Hartsock is also a member.
- **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Advisory Panel** - Administrative Coordinator Sybil Baker regularly attended meetings of the ESSA Advisory Panel. The panel meets quarterly to discuss implementation of ESSA in Delaware. The panel is hosted by the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) and is attended by district personnel, DOE staff as well as Representative Kim Williams.

2019 Poster Contest Awards Luncheon



2019 POSTER CONTEST WINNERS



Elementary School

- 1st - Parker Hazzard - Grade 5 - Southern Delaware School of the Arts, Selbyville/Mrs. Hall
- 2nd - Addison Haley - Grade 5 - Claymont Elementary, Claymont/Rory Gulotti
- 3rd - Dhriti Vadlamani - Grade 2 - Thurgood Marshall Elementary, Newark/Megan McGregor

Middle School

- 1st - Madeline Thompson - Grade 5 - William Henry Middle, Dover/Sarah Mentzer
- 2nd - Ella Dalton - Grade 5 - William Henry Middle, Dover/Sarah Mentzer
- 3rd - Haadia Sheikh - Grade 6 - Campus Community School, Dover/Jennifer Boland

High School

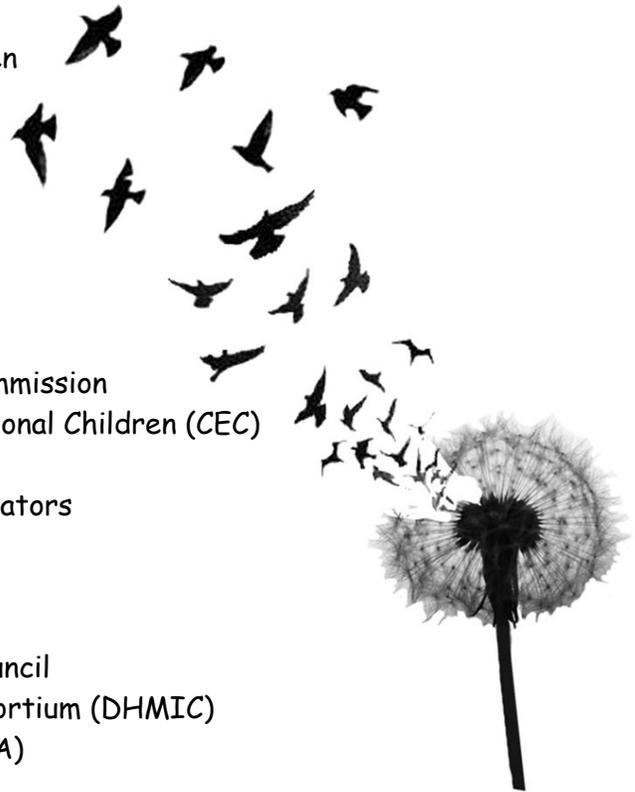
- 1st - Audrey Moser - Grade 9 - Conrad Schools of Science, Wilmington/Renee Allen
- 2nd - Adam Ramadan - Grade 9 - Conrad Schools of Science, Wilmington/Renee Allen
- 3rd - Tina Witke - Grade 11 - Sussex Central, Georgetown/D. Morelli
- 3rd - Zayus Thompson - 12+ - Sussex Consortium at Lifeskills, Lewes/Dawn Ramirez

Computer Generated Art

- 1st - Nina Fike - Grade 11 - Sussex Technical HS, Georgetown/Kelli Gehrke
- 2nd - Logan Farro - Grade 11 - Sussex Technical HS, Georgetown/Kelli Gehrke
- 3rd - Olivia Bragg - Grade 11 - Sussex Technical HS, Georgetown/Kelli Gehrke
- 3rd - Emily Pusey - Grade 11 - Sussex Technical HS, Georgetown/Kelli Gehrke

The following are some of the organizations and committees that GACEC members and staff are involved with on a recurrent basis. These groups assist the Council with interagency collaboration and coalition building.

- American Association of University Women
- American Counseling Association
- ARC of Delaware
- Art Therapy Express
- Autism Delaware
- Behavioral Health Collaborative
- Brain Injury Committee (BIC)
- Correctional Education Association
- CPAC- Child Protection Accountability Commission
- Delaware and National Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
- Delaware State Teachers Association
- Delaware Association of School Administrators
- Delaware Counseling Association
- Delaware Early Childhood Council
- Delaware Families for Hands and Voices
- Delaware Family Support Coordinating Council
- Delaware Healthy Mothers & Infant Consortium (DHMIC)
- Delaware Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- Delaware State Network of Educators
- Department of Education, Exceptional Resources Special Education Group
- Department of Education, Every Student Succeeds Act workgroup
- Department of Labor Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Committee
- Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC)
- DOE Transition Council
- Dover Air Force Base Exceptional Families Resources Program
- Division of Service to Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities (DSAAPD)
- DVRC For Visually Impaired Council
- DVRTF (Delaware Victims' Rights Taskforce) Disability Committee
- Employment First Initiative Oversight Commission
- Endless Possibilities in the Community (EPIC)
- Early Childhood Inclusion Committee (ECIC)
- Family SHADE
- Governor's Advisory Council for Aging and Disabled Persons (GACADP)
- State Health Operations Center Functional Information and Support Center (SHOCFISC)
- Delaware Access and Functional Needs (DE AFN)



- Governor's Commission on Building Access to Community-Based Services (GCBACS)
- Governor's Commission on Employment of People w/Disabilities
- Health Care Commission Disability Health Equity Sub Committee
- Hearing Loss Association of Delaware (HLADE)
- Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) for Part C of IDEA
- LIFE Conference Design Team
- Mobility in Motion
- National and Delaware Chapter of Hands and Voices
- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- Parent Information Center of Delaware (PIC)
- Persons with Access, Functional and Medical Needs
- Protection & Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR)
- Respite Care Committee
- State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD)
- SCPD Policy and Law Committee
- Special Education Strategic Planning Committee
- State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)
- SSIP Early Childhood Part C Collaboration Implementation Team
- Sussex Early Childhood Council
- Sussex Inter-Agency Council
- Trauma Informed Care Interest Group
- University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS) Community Advisory Council (CAC)



~THANK YOU~

2019-2020 Presenters and Speakers

- Mary Ann Mieczkowski of the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE), presentations on Continuous Improvement Plan, Parent Engagement, Transition, Significant Disproportionality, LEA Annual Determinations.
- Cindy Brown of DDOE, presenting on 619 Updates, Continuous Improvement Plan, Parent Engagement, Transition, and Significant Disproportionality.
- Dale Matusevich of DDOE, presenting on Continuous Improvement Plan, Parent Engagement, Transition, Significant Disproportionality, Dropouts and Post School Outcomes.
- Michelle Jackson of DDOE, presenting on Alternate Assessment 1% Cap Plan.
- Pam Bauman of DDOE, presenting on LEA Annual Determinations.
- Annalisa Ekbladh of Autism DE, presenting on 12-month educational program update and remote educational services.
- Tracy Neugebauer presenting on discipline, school climate, and behavior supports.
- Michael Wagner of DOE, presenting on Drivers Education and students with disabilities.
- Sue Campbell of DHSS, presenting on Transition Policy.
- Maria Locuniak of DDOE, presenting on APR Indicators 15 & 16.
- Matthew Ritter of DE State Parks, presenting on accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- Anthony Gonzon of the Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control (DNREC) Fish and Wildlife, presenting on accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- Brian Moore of DDOE, presenting on Restraints and Seclusion.
- Shenika Kirby & Daniel Guidice of the Columbus Organization, presenting on Targeted Case Management updates.
- Stacey Watkins of DDDS, presenting on Targeted Case Management updates.
- Jalee Pernol of DDOE, presenting on Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)/Literacy initiative update
- Linda Smith of DDOE, presenting on MTSS and DE Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) update, discipline, school climate, and behavior supports.
- Maureen Whelan of DDOE, presenting on the Prison Education Program.



GACEC MEMBERSHIP LIST 2019-2020

Susan Campbell	Tika Hartsock
Dafne Carnright	Thomas Keeton
Al Cavalier	Danna Levy
Nancy Cordrey	Beth Mineo
Cathy Cowin	Robert Overmiller
Bill Doolittle	Jennifer Pulcinella
Karen Eller	Brenne' Shepperson
Ann Fisher	Kimberly Warren
Terri Hancharick	Laura Waterland



GACEC STAFF



WENDY STRAUSS

Executive Director

KATHIE CHERRY

Office Manager

LACIE SPENCE

Administrative Coordinator



Legislative/ Regulatory Activity FY 2020



ANNUAL REPORT FY 2020

Bill Number	Summary & Council Action	Status
<p>House Bill No. 175 Voting by Mail</p>	<p>Synopsis: This bill would allow any qualified voter to vote by mail in primary, general, and special federal elections. Council Action: Letter sent to the General Assembly endorsing the proposed legislation and offering suggestions.</p>	<p>Voted Out of Committee; now placed on Ready List 3/27/20</p>
<p>House Bill No. 201 Administration of the Statewide Program for Services for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder</p>	<p>Synopsis: This Act requires the Department of Education (Department) to administer the statewide program for services for students with autism spectrum disorder (program) and that the Department must hire the Director of the program. Council Action: Letter sent to the General Assembly supporting the proposed legislation.</p>	<p>Reported Out of Committee (Education)in House with 13 On Its Merits 6/19/19</p>
<p>House Bill No. 259 College Savings and “ABLE” Savings Accounts</p>	<p>Synopsis: This bill would allow Delaware residents two new deductions from personal income tax. The first is a deduction from taxable income of up to \$2,500 for contributions to a “529” College Savings Plan. The second is a deduction from taxable income of up to \$5,000 for contributions to a “529A” Savings Account – a special account for meeting the needs of certain individuals with disabilities. Under this Act, a Delaware resident taxpayer would be eligible for the deduction regardless of whether they contributed to a 529 or 529A plan sponsored by the State of Delaware or another state or institution, so long as the plans met federal criterion. Council Action: Letter sent to the General Assembly supporting the proposed bill.</p>	<p>Introduced in House and Assigned to Revenue & Finance Committee 6/30/19</p>
<p>House Bill No. 263 Out of Pocket Insulin Cost Cap & Formulary Inclusion</p>	<p>Synopsis: This Act requires that individual, group, and State employee insurance plans cap the amount an individual must pay for insulin prescriptions at \$100 a month and must include at least one formulation of insulin on the lowest tier of the drug formulary developed and maintained by the carrier. Council Action: Letter sent to General Assembly endorsing the proposed legislation.</p>	<p>Signed by the Governor 7/16/20</p>
<p>House Bill No. 265 Tax Exemptions for Veterans with Disabilities</p>	<p>Synopsis: This Act fully exempts county property taxes and local school taxes for a disabled veteran with a 100% VA rated service-connected, permanent and total disability or for a disabled veteran who is receiving 100% disability compensation due to individual unemployability. The minimum requirements are as follows: (1) the disabled veteran must be legally domiciled in the State for a period of time established by the county; and (2) the property for which the exemption is sought must be solely owned by the disabled veteran (or jointly with spouse) and used as his or her primary place of residence. Council Action: Letter sent to General Assembly endorsing the proposed legislation and offering suggestions.</p>	<p>Assigned to Appropriations Committee in House 1/29/20</p>
<p>House Bill No. 307 Annual Behavioral Health Well Check Coverage</p>	<p>Synopsis: This bill proposes to add language to various chapters of the Delaware Code to mandate health insurance coverage for an “annual behavioral health well check.” An annual behavioral health well check is defined a “an annual visit with a licensed mental health clinician with at minimum a master’s level degree.” Council Action: Letter sent to the General Assembly supporting the proposed legislation.</p>	<p>Introduced and Assigned to Administration Committee in the House 3/12/20</p>

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Bill Number	Summary & Council Action	Status
<p>House Bill 315 Low Income Tax Credit for Automobile Purchase Document Fees</p>	<p>Synopsis: This bill seeks to amend Chapter 11, subchapter II of the Title 30 for the Delaware Code relating to Personal Income Tax Credit for Delaware residents by adding 1118. This addition creates a personal income tax credit for certain low income Delaware residents for incurred motor vehicle document fees. The stated purpose of the legislation is to “assist the working poor in obtaining a new or used motor vehicle.” Council Action: Letter sent to the General Assembly supporting the proposed legislation and offering recommendations.</p>	<p>Introduced and Assigned to Revenue & Finance Committee in House 3/12/20</p>
<p>House Bill No. 316 Delaware Resident Low-Income Tax Credit</p>	<p>Synopsis: The proposed bill creates a personal income tax credit for certain low-income Delaware residents. Council Action: Letter sent to the General Assembly supporting the legislation and offering recommendations.</p>	<p>Introduced and Assigned to Revenue & Finance Committee in House 3/12/20</p>
<p>Senate Bill No. 177 Suspension of Driver’s Licenses for School Expulsion</p>	<p>Synopsis: This amendment brings into conformity the provisions of Title 21 with those of Title 14 relating to the revocation of a student’s driving privileges when he or she is expelled from a public school. Prior amendments to Title 14, Section 4130 and Title 21, Section 2707 removed the requirement that the Secretary of the Department of Motor Vehicles revoke a student’s driving privileges upon notice from the superintendent of a public school that the student had been expelled. This amendment accomplishes the intent of those prior amendments by removing surplus language in the parallel section of Title 21. Council Action: Letter sent to the General Assembly endorsing the proposed amendment.</p>	<p>Signed by the Governor 2/10/20</p>
<p>Senate Bill No. 202 Equal Accommodations in Parking</p>	<p>Synopsis: This Act clarifies that a person with a special license plate or permit for persons with disabilities which limit or impair the ability to walk may park for an unlimited period where the length of time is otherwise limited and must be able to park in a metered parking space for at least one hour. This Act clarifies that it is a violation of the state equal accommodations law to prohibit parking as authorized for a person with a special license plate or permit for persons with disabilities which limit or impair the ability to walk. Council Action: Letter sent to General Assembly supporting the legislation.</p>	<p>Introduced and Assigned to Transportation Committee in Senate 1/15/20</p>
<p>Senate Bill No. 203 Speech Language Pathology and Audiology Services for Homeschooled Children with Disabilities</p>	<p>Synopsis: This Act makes children with disabilities who attend homeschools eligible to receive speech language pathology and audiology services in the same manner as students who attend private schools. This Act also makes technical corrections to conform existing law to the standards of the Delaware Legislative Drafting Manual. Council Action: Letter sent to the General Assembly voicing Council observations and concerns.</p>	<p>Introduced and Assigned to Education Committee in Senate 1/15/20</p>
<p>Senate Bill No. 204 Post Labor Day School Start-up</p>	<p>Synopsis: This Act requires public schools to begin their school year after Labor Day. This Act takes effect for the 2020/2021 school year. Council Action: Letter sent to General Assembly voicing Council observations and concerns.</p>	<p>Assigned to Education Committee in Senate 1/23/20</p>

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Regulation	Summary & Council Action	Letter Sent	Response/Update
<p>23 DE Reg. 945 DHSS Policies and Procedures Manual under Part C. (May 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: The Department of Health and Social Services, Birth to Three Program has revised and, in some cases, developed new policies that will better support the comprehensive, high quality implementation of Delaware’s Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention Program. Council Action: Letter written sharing observations.</p>	<p>June 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 992/14 DE Admin. Code 1573 DOE Proposed Certification for Teachers of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Regulation. (June 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: The proposed amendments include adding clarifying language regarding category certificates in Section 1.0; adding defined terms to Section 2.0; clarifying the requirements for issuing a Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate in Section 3.0; specifying the education, knowledge, and skill requirements for obtaining a Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate in Section 4.0; specifying the application requirements in Section 5.0; adding Section 6.0, which concerns the validity of a Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate; adding Section 7.0, which concerns disciplinary actions; adding Section 8.0, which concerns requests for the Secretary of Education to review standard certificate applications; and adding Section 9.0, which concerns recognizing past certificates. Council Action: Letter written supporting the proposed amendments and offering observations.</p>	<p>June 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 914/14 DE Admin. Code 1572 DOE Proposed Certification for Teachers of Students Who are Gifted or Talented. (May 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: The regulation concerns the requirements for a Teacher of Students Who Are Gifted or Talented Standard Certificate in accordance with 14 Del.C. §1220. The proposed amendments include adding clarifying language regarding category certificates in Section 1.0; adding defined terms to Section 2.0; clarifying the requirements for issuing a Teacher of Students Who Are Gifted or Talented Standard Certificate in Section 3.0; specifying the education, knowledge, and skill requirements for obtaining a Teacher of Students Who Are Gifted or Talented Standard Certificate in Section 4.0; specifying the application requirements in Section 5.0; adding Section 6.0, which concerns the validity of a Teacher of Students Who Are Gifted or Talented Standard Certificate; adding Section 7.0, which concerns disciplinary actions; adding Section 8.0, which concerns requests for the Secretary of Education to review standard certificate applications; and adding Section 9.0, which concerns recognizing past certification. Council Action: Letter written supporting the amendment and offering suggestions.</p>	<p>May 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>

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Regulation	Summary & Council Action	Letter Sent	Response/Update
<p>23 DE Reg. 834 Department of Insurance Registration of Pharmacy Benefit Managers Reg. (April 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Regulation to implement HB 194. House Bill 194 as amended by House Amendment 1 (HB 194/HA1), <i>see</i> 82 Del. Laws, c. 115 (2019), added a new Subchapter V to Chapter 33A of the Insurance Code. Entitled “Registration of Pharmacy Benefits Managers,” the legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Requires pharmacy benefits managers (“PBMs”) to register with the Insurance Commissioner; (2) Permits the Insurance Commissioner to issue cease and desist orders to PBMs who commit fraudulent acts or violations of Title 18, Chapter 33A; (3) Requires PBMs to maintain certain records; (4) Permits the Insurance Commissioner to examine the affairs of PBMs; (5) Grants the Insurance Commissioner the authority to enforce Chapter 33A of Title 18 by imposing fines, requiring PBMs to take affirmative actions, and suspending, denying, or revoking a PBM’s registration; and (6) Updates existing law regarding maximum allowable cost lists and establishes a more transparent appeals process on which a pharmacy may rely if a PBM does not reimburse the pharmacy the amount owed under their contract or pursuant to the maximum allowable cost list. <p>Council Action: Letter written in support and offering suggestions.</p>	<p>April 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 808/14 DE Admin. Code 1571 DOE Proposed Certification of Special Education Teacher of Students with Disabilities Regulation. (April 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: The Professional Standards Board (Board), acting in consultation and cooperation with the Delaware Department of Education (Department), developed amendments to 14 DE Admin. Code 1571 Special Education Teacher of Students with Disabilities pursuant to 14 Del.C. §1203 and 14 Del.C. §1205(b). The regulation concerns the requirements for a Special Education Teacher of Students with Disabilities Standard Certificate pursuant to 14 Del.C. §1220. The proposed amendments include clarifying changes to Section 1.0; adding defined terms to Section 2.0; clarifying the requirements for issuing a Special Education Teacher of Students with Disabilities Standard Certificate in Section 3.0; specifying the education, knowledge, and skill requirements for obtaining a Special Education Teacher of Students with Disabilities Standard Certificate in Section 4.0; specifying the application requirements in Section 5.0; adding Section 6.0, which concerns the validity of a Special Education Teacher of Students with Disabilities Standard Certificate; adding Section 7.0, which concerns disciplinary actions; adding Section 8.0, which concerns requests for the Secretary of Education to review standard certificate applications; and adding Section 9.0, which concerns recognizing past certification.</p> <p>Council Action: Letter written sharing observations.</p>	<p>April 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>

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Regulation	Summary & Council Action	Letter Sent	Response/Update
<p>23 DE Reg. 831 Department of Insurance Prompt Payment of Workers Compensation Claims Reg. (April 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: The Delaware Department of Insurance proposal to amend Regulation 903 to allow insurance carriers to pay settled insurance claims other than claims that are subject to the Workers Compensation Statute at 19 Del.C. §2344 by electronic means. Council Action: Letter written endorsing the proposed amendment.</p>	<p>April 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 818 DHSS/DHCQ Proposed Personal Assistance Regulation (April 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: The Division of Health Care Quality plans to publish the “proposed” amendments to the regulations governing personal assistance services agencies and hold them out for public comment per Delaware law. The amendments update and clarify the regulatory requirements to ensure consumers receive safe and quality care/services from personal assistance services agencies. In addition, the proposed regulations contain new language to implement the "Share the Care Act" (Senate Bill 27) which permits an individual employed by a personal assistance services agency to administer medications to an adult consumer who resides in the individual’s own home if all requirements are met. Council Action: Letter written endorsing the proposed amendment.</p>	<p>April 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 780 DHSS Birth to Three Annual Federal Funding Grant Application General Notice Regulation (March 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: The Delaware Department of Health and Social Services submittal of its annual grant application under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004. Council Action: Letter written offering observations.</p>	<p>April 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 617/&618/14 DE Admin. Code 922 & 925 DOE Proposed Children with Disabilities Subpart A., Purposed and Definitions and 925 Children with Disabilities Subpart D., Evaluations, Eligibility, Determination, Individualized Education Programs Regulation (Feb. 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: This regulation is being amended to specifically update definitions in the disability categories which include Autism, Deaf-Blindness, Developmental Delay, Emotional Disability, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Speech or Language Impairment, and Traumatic Brain Injury. It is also being amended to add new definitions for Adverse Effect on Educational Performance and Multi-Tiered System of Support, and to remove the definition of Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers. The disability category definitions are being revised to align with the updated disability category criteria. The definition of Adverse Effect on Educational Performance is being added for further clarity. The definition of Multi-Tiered System of Support is being added as it is part of the eligibility criteria for several of the disability categories. The definition of Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers is being removed as it is no longer required under ESSA. Council Action: Letter sent providing comments, thoughts, concerns and opportunities for collaboration between the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) and the GACEC.</p>	<p>March 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>

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Regulation	Summary & Council Action	Letter Sent	Response/Update
<p>23 DE Reg. 526 DHSS/DMMA Proposed Medicaid Long Term Community Spouse Regulation (January 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: The purpose of this notice is to advise the public that Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS)/Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance (DMMA) proposal to amend Medicaid Long Term Care Program – Community Spouse. Council Action: Letter sent supporting the correction.</p>	<p>January 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 523 DHSS/DMMA Proposed Adult Dental Services Regulation (January 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS)/Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance (DMMA) proposal to amend Title XIX Medicaid State Plan and the Alternative Benefit Plan regarding Dental Services, specifically, to add adult dental services and to maintain the State's assurance that the ABP matches regular Medicaid. Council Action: Letter sent endorsing the amendment and offering observations.</p>	<p>January 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 528 DHS/DMMA Proposed Delaware Healthy Children's Program State Plan Regulation (January 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Proposal to revise language for Delaware's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) State Plan Health Service Initiative to align with the DOE's definition of low-income in its Vision Services - School-Based Initiative, and to revise the data collection process to aid in identification of uninsured children. Council Action: Letter sent sharing comments and observations.</p>	<p>January 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 507/14 DE Admin Code 614 DOE proposed Uniform Definitions for Student Conduct Which May Result in Alternative Placement or Expulsion Regulation (Jan. 24, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: The Department has reviewed the regulation in order to comply with 29 Del.C. §10407 which requires regulations to be reviewed on a recurring basis every four years and updated Delaware Code citations in the regulation that were previously changed in Delaware Code. Council Action: Letter sent to the Secretary of Education in support of the amendment and requesting that DOE review the amendment for consistency in punctuation and capitalization.</p>	<p>January 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 519 DHSS/DMMA Proposed Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) Regulation (January 1, 2020)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Proposal to establish coverage and reimbursement methodologies for nonemergency medical transportation (NEMT) services for all Medicaid eligible individuals. Council Action: Letter sent supporting the proposed amendment and sharing observations.</p>	<p>January 2020</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 428 DHSS/DMMA Proposed Authorization and Regulation of Medicaid/CHIP Accountable Care Organizations Regulation (December 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS)/Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance (DMMA) proposal to amend Division of Social Services Manual (DSSM) regarding Accountable Care Organizations, specifically, to set standards for the authorization and regulation for Medicaid/CHIP beneficiaries Delaware to improve health outcomes while reducing costs. Council Action: Letter sent reiterating the questions and concerns noted in the letter submitted by the Disabilities Law Program (DLP).</p>	<p>December 2019</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>

ANNUAL REPORT FY 2020

Regulation	Summary & Council Action	Letter Sent	Response/Update
<p>23 DE Reg. 427 DMMA Proposed Drug Utilization Review Regulation (December 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS) proposal to amend Title XIX Medicaid State Plan regarding the Drug Utilization Review (DUR), specifically, to update provisions included in section 1004 of the SUPPORT Act. Council Action: Letter sent supporting the proposed amendment and sharing observations.</p>	<p>December 2019</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 416/14 DE Admin Code 251 DOE Proposed Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Regulation (December 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Proposed amendment to update the names of the federal offices that are responsible for fielding complaints and conducting investigations of alleged Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) violations. Council Action: Letter sent supporting the proposed amendment and sharing observations.</p>	<p>December 2019</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 433 DHSS/DPH Proposed Delaware Medical Marijuana Code Revisions Regulation (December 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS) and Department of Public Health (DPH) proposal to amend the definition of “debilitating medical conditions” to include terminal illness, seizure disorder, glaucoma, chronic migraines, and new daily persistent headache. Council Action: Letter sent sharing comments and observations.</p>	<p>December 2019</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 452/14 DE Admin. Code 930 DOE Final Supportive Instruction (Homebound) Regulation (December 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: DOE proposal to clarify that qualifying illnesses and chronic conditions are not limited to physical illness and includes mental illness and conditions. Council Action: Letter sent supporting the proposed regulation and offering suggestions.</p>	<p>December 2019</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 353/14 DE Admin Code 851 DOE Proposed Comprehensive Health Education Program Regulation (November 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: DOE proposal to amend 14 DE Admin Code 851, which requires school districts and charter schools to establish a comprehensive health education program and outlines the requirements for such programs. Council Action: Letter sent supporting the proposed amendments and sharing observations and recommendations.</p>	<p>November 2019</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 361/14 Admin Code 1150 DOE Proposed School Transportation Regulation (November 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Proposed amendment to clarify safety procedures and protocols for school bus drivers, aides and supervisors; to align with federal requirements per the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s Entry Level Driver Training; to align with requirements for commercial licensed drivers per the Commercial Driver’s License Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse and to make grammatical and style corrections per the <i>Delaware Administrative Code Drafting and Style Manual</i>. Council Action: Letter sent offering observations and recommendations.</p>	<p>November 2019</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 263/14 DE Admin. Code 624 DOE Proposed School District/Charter School Policy Prohibiting Cyberbullying Regulation (October 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Proposed amendment of 14 DE Admin. Code 624 School District/Charter School Policy Prohibiting Cyberbullying. This regulation is being amended to remove an outdated school year reference, update a statutory reference and to comply with 29 Del.C. §10407 which requires regulations to be reviewed on a recurring basis every four years. Council Action: Letter written in support of the proposed amendment and offering observations.</p>	<p>October 2019</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>

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Regulation	Summary & Council Action	Letter Sent	Response/Update
23 DE Reg. 275/14 DE Admin. Code 930 DOE Proposed Supportive Instruction (Homebound) Regulation (October 1, 2019)	Synopsis: DOE has reviewed the regulation in order to comply with 29 Del.C. §10407 which requires regulations to be reviewed on a recurring bases every four years. Council Action: Letter written to Secretary Bunting supporting the amendment and sharing suggestions.	October 2019	No Formal Response Received
23 DE Reg. 147/14 DE Admin. Code 603 DOE Proposed Compliance with the Gun Free Schools Act Regulation (September 1, 2019)	Synopsis: Proposed amendment to update the statutory reference, make minor clarifications and comply with 29 Del.C. §10407 which requires regulations to be reviewed on a recurring basis every four years. This regulation requires school districts to provide DOE with descriptions of firearm and deadly weapon school expulsions. Council Action: Letter written supporting the proposed changes and offering observations.	September 2019	No Formal Response Received
23 DE Reg. 149/14 DE Admin Code 611 DOE Proposed Consortium Discipline Alternative Program for Treatment of Severe Discipline Problems Regulations (September 1, 2019)	Synopsis: Propose amendment to update the statutory reference(s), make minor clarifications and comply with 29 Del.C. §1040. This amendment defines student eligibility for Consortium Discipline Alternative Programs (CDAP). Council Action: Letter written supporting the proposed changes and sharing observations and requests for additional information.	September 2019	No Formal Response Received
23 DE Reg. 178 DHCC Proposed Health Insurance Individual Market Stabilization Reinsurance Program and Fund Regulation (September 1, 2019)	Synopsis: The Delaware Health Care Commission (DHCC), Department of Health and Social Services, is proposing regulations governing Reinsurance. The regulations include establishing administrative procedures for the reinsurance program. Council Action: Letter written endorsing the proposed regulations and requesting the DHCC consider covering more claims at a different threshold.	September 2019	No Formal Response Received
23 DE Reg. 182 DDDS Proposed Reportable Incident Management and Corrective Measure Regulation (September 1, 2019)	Synopsis: Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS)/Division of Developmental Disabilities Service (DDDS) proposal to implement oversight and monitoring of reportable incidents pursuant to DHSS Policy Memorandum 46. Council Action: Letter written thanking DDDS for accepting earlier recommendations and sharing observations on some remaining concerns.	September 2019	No Formal Response Received
23 DE Reg. 184 DMMA Proposed Drug Utilization Review Regulation (September 1, 2019)	Synopsis: DMMA proposal to amend the Title XIX Medicaid State Plan regarding the Drug Utilization Review (DUR). The proposal will specifically update provisions included in the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities Act (SUPPORT). Council Action: Letter written in support of the amendment.	September 2019	No Formal Response Received
23 DE Reg. 186 DMMA Proposed Acute Inpatient Hospital Readmission Claims Regulation (September 1, 2019)	Synopsis: DMMA proposal to amend the Inpatient Hospital Provider Policy Manual regarding acute inpatient hospital readmissions claims. The DMMA proposed regulations updates the readmission time interval from 10 days to 30 days. Council Action: Letter written to supporting the proposed amendment.	September 2019	No Formal Response Received

ANNUAL REPORT FY 2020

Regulation	Summary & Council Action	Letter Sent	Response/Update
<p>23 DE Reg. 188 DMMA Proposed Telehealth Services Originating Site Fees Regulation (September 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Proposed amendment to add facilities to which originating site fees can be paid, specifically Federally Qualified Health Centers and School Based Wellness Centers. Council Action: Letter written in support of the proposed amendment.</p>	<p>September 2019</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 191 DMMA Proposed Obesity Drug Coverage Regulation (September 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Proposed amendment to clarify policy related to drugs indicated for the treatment of obesity to address weight loss with co-morbid conditions with prior authorization. Council Action: Letter written supporting this proposed clarification.</p>	<p>September 2019</p>	<p>Response Received from DHSS, DMMA in appreciation of Council's support.</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 83 DSS Proposed Regulation on Documentation of State Residency (August 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Proposal to amend sections of the DSS Manual regarding state residency documentation requirements. The proposed changes are meant to bring DSS policy in line with the relevant federal regulations. Council Action: Letter written endorsing the proposed regulation and sharing observations.</p>	<p>August 2019</p>	<p>Response received from DHSS, DMMA advising changes will be implemented on all five recommendations provided.</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 89 DSS Proposed Regulation on TANF CMR School Attendance Requirement (August 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Delaware Health and Social Services/Division of Social Services proposal to amend the Division of Social Service Manual sections 3012 and 3012.1 regarding Temporary Aide to Needy Families (TANF), specifically, to update policy regarding the school attendance element of the Contract of Mutual Responsibility (CMR). Council Action: Letter written sharing observations.</p>	<p>August 2019</p>	<p>Response received from DSS thanking Council for the review and feedback.</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 98 DSS Proposed Regulation on Purchase of Care-Determining and Reviewing Child Care (August 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Delaware Health and Social Services/Division of Social Services proposes to amend section 11004.11 of the Division of Social Service Manual regarding Purchase of Care (POC), specifically, to align policy with Federal requirements. Council Action: Letter written endorsing the proposed amendment.</p>	<p>August 2019</p>	<p>Response received from DSS in appreciation of Council's support.</p>
<p>23 DE Reg. 93 DSS Proposed Regulation on TANF and GA Eligibility (August 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Delaware Health and Social Services/Division of Social Services proposal to amend the Division of Social Service Manual sections 4006, 4006.1 and 4006.2 regarding TANF and General Assistance (GA), specifically, to revise eligibility policy related to excluded income. Council Action: Letter written sharing observations.</p>	<p>August 2019</p>	<p>Response received from DSS thanking Council for the review and feedback.</p>

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Regulation	Summary & Council Action	Letter Sent	Response/Update
<p>23 DE Reg. 9 DHSS/DHCQ Proposed Regulations Governing Free Standing Emergency Departments (July 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Division of Health Care Quality proposed amendments to the regulations governing free standing emergency departments. The amendments update the regulatory language to clearly define the scope of practice required of a free-standing emergency department. In addition, the amendments provide a level of protection for the public that seeks services at free standing emergency departments by ensuring the delivery of safe and adequate care.</p> <p>Council Action: Letter written sharing observations.</p>	<p>July 2019</p>	<p>No Formal Response Received</p>
<p>23 DE. Reg. 10 DMMA Proposed State Plan Amendment--Over-the-Counter Drugs without a Prescription. (July 1, 2019)</p>	<p>Synopsis: Delaware Health and Social Services/Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance (DHSS/DMMA) proposal to amend Attachment 3.1 Page 5 of Title XIX Medicaid State Plan regarding Over-the-Counter Drugs, specifically, to ensure members may request coverage of over-the-counter Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved medications without a prescription when required by law.</p> <p>Council Action: Letter written endorsing the proposed amendment.</p>	<p>July 2019</p>	<p>Response received from DMMA in appreciation of Council's input.</p>



“Until you spread your wings you will have no idea how far you can fly.”

-unknown

Appendix A

DATE: July 20, 2020

TO: The Honorable John Carney, Governor of Delaware
The Honorable Susan Bunting, Secretary of Education

FROM: Ann C. Fisher, Chairperson
GACEC

RE: **GACEC Response to the Re-Opening of Schools Recommendations**

Greetings:

The Governor’s advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) is the state advisory panel for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its amendments in Delaware. We are charged with monitoring and advising on the services provided to students receiving special education services and those who are gifted and talented. As we have listened to the weekly sessions, we did not hear where some of our concerns had been presented to the working groups. As you can imagine we have always been extremely interested in discussions and plans on how to safely and effectively reopen Delaware school buildings and ensure our children are given the opportunity to continue to learn. Over the last several weeks, Council has submitted our questions, concerns and comments for each of the committees to review. We have followed the sessions closely, which were streamed online weekly.

Our number one priority has always been to ensure that our most vulnerable populations of Delaware students were at the forefront of all conversations as recommendations were being developed and to ensure equitable outcomes for all of our Delaware students. The safe re-opening of our school buildings for students and staff, along with our special education students, students with 504 plans, students with special health care needs and the needs of our incarcerated youth has continued to be our main concern. A plan needed to be developed with recommendations on how to best support the needs of these students and best support their educators and the adults who support them within the education system.

The individual workgroup plans needed to outline recommendations to best support our most vulnerable population of students, staff members and families prior to being submitted to Governor Carney and Secretary Bunting. Those plans needed to reflect an urgency to address the needs of our most vulnerable students and their safe return to our school buildings. The recommendations needed to reflect how we would ensure our most vulnerable populations of students would not receive a break in their services and address how to best support students in the remote learning environment, in the event we return in a hybrid or remote learning model. This would include, but not be limited to, supporting educators and related services personnel to ensure best practices, supports and professional development were provided to ensure services were being delivered and the needs of students were addressed in an efficient and effective way.

While our most vulnerable population of students were mentioned at times, there was never a focus or extensive conversation on how to best support special education students, their educators, their families and their schools.

Council emphasized the need for the working groups to meet together to discuss topics, which seem to be overlapping especially around the areas of the health and wellness of students and ensuring all students

receive equitable outcomes in this process.

There has not been a focused discussion on how to support the health and wellness of our students, teachers and staff members when school resumes and what this support will look like although there was discussion regarding the social and emotional health of students and developing a survey to assess students. The focus appears to be on “assessment” and “accountability” but not a true focus on equitable outcomes.

There has been discussion regarding the need for professional development for educators, but limited discussion around how this will look and what programs have been vetted or recommended for professional development. If remote learning continues in the fall, how can we best support students, families, educators and the local education agencies (LEAs) to ensure they receive the support needed? Although, many schools have ended for the year, we still have a population of students continuing their remote learning through the summer. How are we supporting our students with disabilities, their families, their educators and their LEAs through the summer?

We have extreme concern regarding the themes coming out of the equity and academics work group. We have noted how the conversations were focused around “assessment” and “accountability” but included only limited conversation on how to ensure equitable outcomes for students with special needs. Will the workgroups be making recommendations that address best practices for receiving services remotely or when there is limited contact allowed due to social distancing protocols?

We also have some concerns regarding families who may not feel comfortable or feel it is safe to send their child to school. If a student has to stay home due to COVID, we need to ensure their situation and needs are being addressed. For instance, how can we support families with flexibility in the workplace especially if the student has to wait for test results and has to quarantine for 14 days. What is the process if the family does not feel safe sending their child, particularly children with special health care needs back to the school building? We think it may be beneficial for the working groups to collaborate with the Governor’s Pandemic Resurgence Advisory Committee and Subcommittees, which is being led by Lt. Governor Bethany Hall-Long to determine what workplace supports may need to be put in place to support families.

As mentioned earlier, the GACEC as the state’s IDEA advisory panel is charged with monitoring and advising on the services provided to our students receiving special education services. We as a Council cannot support the recommendations submitted by the individual workgroups at this time. We do not feel this plan and the recommendations submitted to Governor Carney and Secretary Bunting ensure equitable outcomes for our most vulnerable students nor does it address multiple questions and concerns submitted by the Council.

Attached are the comments that Council developed and has been sharing with the Workgroups over the past few weeks, following the online meetings. Most of these comments have previously been submitted but there are a few items that have been developed since the Workgroup recommendations have been released. As stated earlier, some of the comments submitted by the GACEC were mentioned during the Workgroup meetings but Council feels that there were no extensive conversations to actually resolve the issues being discussed. We hope and trust that you will take the time to review and discuss the path forward that will keep our most vulnerable population safe when returning to school.

We thank you all for the opportunity to address the needs of our constituents. Thank you for your consideration.

Health and Wellness Workgroup

Mike Rodriguez, Associate Secretary
 Delaware Department of Education
 401 Federal Street, Suite 2
 Dover, DE 19901

Dr. Meghan Walls
 Nemours/A.I. DuPont Hospital for Children
 1600 Rockland Road
 Wilmington, DE 19803

1. What measures will be put in place to help support educators with our special needs population? How will you address the needs of our students and educators?
2. It is imperative that our students feel safe and secure. It is easy to make a recommendation for more mental health services, but how are we going to ensure the funding is available? Will the funding from the CARES Act provide the necessary funding to ensure our schools are equipped with the resources needed?
3. Resources are needed for prison education programs. There are young students, ages 16-21, with special needs in our prison system. The largest population of K-12 students are held at the Howard Young Correctional Institution. How will we be able to secure funding to ensure their educational needs are met?
4. If school buildings have to implement social distancing practices in the fall, there will be a need for smaller class sizes. How will Districts be supported to ensure there is the necessary funding for the hiring of more staff? Some schools are filled to capacity. How will more classrooms be created in buildings where there is no available room?
5. How will our students in wheelchairs and our medically fragile students be safe with social distancing measures in place? There will need to be contact and direct support provided to this population of students from the bus to inside the school building. What training measures will need to be put in place for all staff? Will we be making different guidelines for them?
6. Children with medical conditions, such as asthma and diabetes, in addition to students with IEPs and 504 plan will need special accommodations. There may be issues with some students wearing masks. Who will be responsible for putting masks on students who cannot do this for themselves? How will outbursts and meltdowns of students who are not comfortable with masks be handled? And by whom?

If remote learning continues, would utilizing more visiting teachers to go out to the homes to provide learning in the home be an option? How would this model work? How will we keep staff and families safe if the social distancing measures are not lifted?

7. How will we support our educators? What services and resources can be provided to our educators to ensure their safety and their effectiveness with their students?
8. How will we support staff members with underlying health conditions working inside and outside of the school buildings; as well as staff members working with students with underlying health conditions? (Ex: *crossing guards, bus drivers, cafeteria staff*)
9. **We are extremely concerned that the needs of our most vulnerable students are not being addressed. Many of the concerns are being placed in a “parking lot” to address at a later**

time. The recommendations offer limited information on addressing the needs of these students.

10. We need to address families who choose to keep their child(ren) at home. How will we ensure the needs of these students are being met, their IEP goals are being addressed and that they are receiving their related services?
11. How will non-compliance be handled with students? Some students, due to sensory issues, may not be able to wear a mask. For our students who may put things in their mouth frequently, how are we going to ensure the mask is not a choking hazard?
12. Will staff be required to have their temperatures checked? Our students with disabilities will need interaction from staff. For example, we have Delaware students who use a feeding tube, may have respiratory issues and other healthcare needs. What practices will be put in place to ensure the safety and wellness of students and staff while following the recommended social distancing guidelines?

Equity and Academics Workgroup

Monica Gant, Associate Secretary
Delaware Department of Education
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901

Ashley Giska, Assistant Superintendent
Laurel School District
1160 S. Central Avenue
Laurel, DE 19956

1. What measures will be put in place to help support educators with our special needs population?
2. How are we going to ensure our special education students will receive their related services (*Speech, Occupational Therapy, and/or Physical Therapy*)? What will this look like?
3. Early Childhood needs are difficult to address remotely. Learning for young children is more hands on, as their attention spans are much shorter than older children. What plans are being developed to address the educational and developmental needs of young children, especially young children with disabilities or special health care needs?
4. Connectivity is a major concern and barrier for some of our Delaware families. Wi-Fi is not available to all of our families in Delaware. While many hotspots have been placed across the State, the range is not adequate to service all families. It is not ideal for children to have to leave their house, take their device and move to a parking lot or close to a building to connect. What can be accomplished this summer to ensure all Delaware students have reliable access?

There are also areas of Sussex County with no Wi-Fi access. How are we addressing this? How can we accelerate plans for providing more towers in the Southern part of the State? Is there any way to expedite connectivity for our students at greatest risk and those who may need to receive these services first? We also have educators living in Sussex County who do not have access to reach their students at high risk?

5. How do we support schools and Districts who may need help with providing their students 1:1 devices?

6. If remote learning continues in the fall, what type of professional development/learning opportunities can we provide to teachers?
7. How will LEAs be held accountable in terms of providing necessary services to vulnerable students? We are concerned that adequate care be shown so that our students are not overwhelmed by testing as we all try to return to normalcy.
- 8. Has there been any discussion or time spent on the platforms schools and educators are using for online lessons and meetings? For example, lessons and IEP meetings should have the availability of closed captioning. What online platforms will provide this option moving forward?**
- 9. If Internet access continues to be a barrier for families, students and staff, what other options will be available for families? There were discussions around DVD options, creating lessons on thumb drives and lessons being developed via PBS Learning Media and the Delaware State Education Association (DSEA). When will these options be discussed with parents to gather their input?**
- 10. Our Districts have worked incredibly hard across the state and have had to adjust quickly to remote learning. With the limited number of educator voices, administrator voices and LEA voices at the table, how are we reaching out to Districts to see what is working for their students. We need to ask the LEAs what best practices they have put in place and what is working well in their District so it can serve as a model moving forward with supporting families. We need to discuss what the LEAs are doing to provide technical support, access and device deployment and what they are doing to remove some of the barriers, which keep families from participating in remote learning?**

Systems and Operations Workgroup

Chuck Longfellow, Associate Secretary
 Delaware Department of Education
 401 Federal Street, Suite 2
 Dover, DE 19901

Oliver Gumbs, Director of Business Operations
 Cape Henlopen School District
 1270 Kings Hwy
 Lewes, DE 19958

1. What measures will be put in place to help support educators with our special needs population? How will you address the needs of our students and educators?
2. We need to consider how we will handle taking temperatures of students and staff members. Will schools be provided with funding to purchase scanning systems to check the temperature of those entering the school building?
3. How will the districts handle disbursement, upgrading and cleaning of devices during the summer and in the fall, if there is a second outbreak of COVID-19? Will students, especially high-risk students, be allowed to keep devices throughout the summer?
4. What is the process/procedure when someone tests positive? How will information be shared with students, their families and educators?